

The International Journal of Rural Criminology

Editor's Introduction

Few events in life are truly exhilarating. The long, steep descent on the first dip of my inaugural roller coaster ride long ago as a child certainly qualifies. The moment when my advisor shook my hand and wished me congratulations on successfully passing my dissertation defense would be another. There are a few others as well, and this short list of exhilaratingly memorable moments will grow by one, because I am composing the introduction to the **International Journal of Rural Criminology**. It is the successor to an attempt to begin a peer-reviewed periodical on the subject of rural crime that grew out of a conference in 2006 organized by one of the leading rural crime scholars in the world, Dr. Elaine Barclay at the University of New England, New South Wales. That journal was called the **International Journal of Rural Crime**, and can still be accessed at <http://www.ruralfutures.uned.edu.au/rurcrime/ijrc.htm>. In a sense, the articles in the original should be considered like a prequel to this attempt, with five articles about rural crime still well worth accessing.

This journal has nearly the same name and the same abbreviation as the first attempt, and for reasons well intended. Like the original, the **International Journal of Rural Criminology** is designed to be a place where the growing literature on rural crime can be published and read. *The Ohio State University Libraries "Knowledge Bank"* is one of the largest repositories for electronically based information in the world. Along with all other scholarly materials housed in the Knowledge Bank, the journal is indexed by both Google and Google Scholar.

Second, this new journal will publish articles both *qualitative and quantitative, and from a variety of theoretical perspectives*. A key deficiency of past rural crime scholarship is its mostly descriptive, atheoretical nature. This hinders the generalizability of results from rural research, stifles incorporation of the rural into mainstream criminological literature, and precludes the possibility of discovering defects, both conceptual and substantive, within classic forms and contemporary expressions of criminology theory, whose origins, considerations, and applications remain short-sighted by their urban myopia.

Third, submissions that deal with rural crime issues beyond a few "English-speaking" countries, where there are already large cadres of criminologists, are most appreciated. Like the other IJRC, the goal here is to be truly international, and not dominated by rural crime in the US context (or by the Australian, British, and Canadian context). Readers should keep in mind that nearly 50 percent of the world's population is rural, a percentage that far, far exceeds the proportion of rural-focused articles in mainline journals. *Unfortunately, the goal to move beyond the borders of the "big four" may not be achievable in the short term (as can be seen, this first issues fails to meet the stated ideal), and even for many years, but place-based diversity of rural-focused submissions is and will remain the long-term goal of IJRC.*

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Finally, this journal's editorial focus does not attempt to restrict submissions in any way other than that a manuscript must be mainly focused on issues of crime and criminal justice in the rural context. *Merely putting the word "rural" in the title and then ignoring the cultural, economic, human, political and social dimensions of rural crime is a form of tokenism insufficient to merit consideration for publication in IJRC.*

With a steady and unerring focus on crime and its impact on rural peoples and rural communities around the world, it is hoped that the journal will fulfill a long-term mission. This mission is to help repair one of the biggest deficiencies in the field of criminology, namely, its overwhelming urban bias and nonsensical neglect of the rural. To this end, the first issue of the **International Journal of Rural Criminology** begins with six articles on topics that include: perceptions of terrorism, forms of poaching, the illegal rural entrepreneur, the relationship of social structure and social change to official crime rates in rural communities, industrial restructuring and perceptions of crime in nine rural communities of the US South, and issues related to jails in the rural US.

The goal is to publish the **International Journal of Rural Criminology** at least twice, and possibly four times, each year. Submissions are most welcome at any time, and readers even more so! Manuscripts of any length are welcome, but as a general guideline, submissions should be no longer than 12,000 words (including tables, references, and endnotes). I strongly suggest that prospective authors submit original drafts that adhere to a formatting style for text and for citations as found in the current set of articles.

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